

Ballast water management and the broader issue of aquatic invasive species is a matter that has received far too little attention, given its dramatic impact on the economy and the environment.

For several years, I have strongly supported a comprehensive approach to stopping the influx of aquatic invasive species, and this bill provides a very, very good start.

Although aquatic invasive species enter into ecosystems through many different pathways, such as natural migration, attaching themselves to ships, and aquaculture, the most common pathway is through ballast water. Ballast water is pumped on board a ship to control its stability at sea. Ships often take on ballast water at an initial port and discharge it at their destination port. When a ship pumps harbor water into its ballast tanks, it usually also sucks up aquatic species from that harbor. When those ballast tanks are emptied, those aquatic species are introduced into a new ecosystem and they become invasive species.

Since some ships are capable of holding millions of gallons of ballast water, the potential for spreading invasive species is large. Once an invasive species takes hold in a new environment, it has the ability to disrupt the balance of an ecosystem and cause significant environmental and economic harm.

In the United States, invasive species cost tens of billion of dollars each year. For example, Zebra mussels have cost the various entities in the Great Lake's basin an estimated \$5 billion for expenses relating to cleaning water intake pipes, purchasing filtration equipment and so forth. Sea lamprey control measures in the Great Lakes cost approximately \$10 million to \$15 million annually. And on top of these expenses, there is the cost of lost fisheries due to these invaders. For these reasons, combating aquatic invasive species is a central element of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration strategy to protect and restore the Great Lakes.

However, invasive species are not just a problem in the Great Lakes. Invasive species also affect coastal regions throughout the United States. From the Chinese mitten crabs in the North Pacific, to Asian sea squirts in New England, to New Zealand boring pill bugs in the Pacific Northwest, to Asian carp in the Mississippi River, to Zebra mussels across the United States, these foreign invaders cause significant economic and ecological damage throughout North America.

If we do not pass this bill into law, we are just opening the door for many more invasive species to arrive via ballast water. The goal of H.R. 2830 is to eliminate invasive species in ballast water by 2015. To meet this goal, the bill requires vessels operating in U.S. waters to be outfitted with ballast water treatment systems that meet interim standards starting in 2009, with more stringent standards starting in 2012.

This is an excellent bill. I urge everyone to support it and vote for it.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland, the chairman of the Coast Guard Subcommittee, Mr. CUMMINGS.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Coast Guard Subcommittee, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1126 which provides a rule for the consideration of H.R. 2830 and makes in order an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The base text of H.R. 2830, which was ordered to be reported by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in June 2007, already includes many significant provisions to strengthen the Coast Guard and respond to challenges we face in maritime transportation. For example, the bill, as reported, includes standards to prevent the continued introduction of invasive species in U.S. waters through ballast water. The bill creates an ombudsman in each Coast Guard district to serve as a liaison between the Coast Guard and the port community. And the bill introduces critical measures to improve the safety of the United States fishing industry, one of our Nation's deadliest professions.

The amendment in the nature of a substitute adds critical titles that address specific issues considered by the Committee on Transportation and the Coast Guard Subcommittee after the bill was reported. Specifically, the amendment includes titles that strengthen both the Coast Guard's homeland security functions and its maritime safety missions. The amendment in the nature of a substitute also transfers the appeals of cases in which the Coast Guard decides to spend or revoke a mariner's credential to a neutral agency, the National Transportation Safety Board.

Further, the amendment includes the text of H.R. 2722, the Integrated Deepwater Program Reform Act which previously passed the House by a vote of 426-0 and which would strengthen the Coast Guard's ability to manage the \$24 billion, 25-year Deepwater procurements.

Similarly, the amendment includes the text of the Maritime Pollution Prevention Act to reduce emissions from ships. This measure also previously passed the House. Adoption of H. Res. 1126 would enable the House to consider long-overdue legislation to authorize the Coast Guard and to strengthen our U.S. maritime industry, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 3 minutes to the favorite son from North Carolina, the gentleman, Mr. COBLE.

Mr. COBLE. I thank my friend from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill. We in the Congress cannot lose sight of the purpose of Deepwater, which is to pro-

vide the men and women of the Coast Guard with the necessary tools to protect our homeland. I applaud actions undertaken to move this program in the right direction and support this language. I remain concerned, however, that some provisions in H.R. 2830 may create undue burdens and delays, which will, in turn, delay the desperately needed modernization and may ultimately add to the overall costs.

The marine safety components of the underlying bill also cause me concern. Previously, the Commandant announced a number of changes he had directed the Coast Guard to implement regarding marine safety. Under his leadership, his able leadership, I might add, the men and women of the Coast Guard continue to examine and improve upon the Coast Guard's marine safety role.

Having served in the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Reserve, I know this armed service is unique because of its structure and flexibility. On a daily basis, Coast Guard men and women focus on drug interdiction, environmental protection, migrant interdiction, port security, search and rescue, homeland security, maritime safety, and aids to navigation. The list is almost endless. Each of these roles complements the other.

I continue to support efforts to provide stakeholders an opportunity to voice their concerns, provide constructive feedback, and work together to improve the marine safety aspect of the Coast Guard. At the same time, however, I firmly believe that we should give the Coast Guard the time, opportunity, and resources to improve and expand on its marine safety efforts prior to congressional intervention.

I'm equally concerned regarding the underlying bill which lacks provisions that would provide the Coast Guard the authority to protect seafarers who facilitate the government's ability to investigate and prosecute environmental crimes. This is another example where current law impedes our ability to prosecute criminals.

I would also like to express my concern with section 720 of the underlying bill which addresses security at liquefied natural gas facilities. Consistently, I have cast votes in favor of legislation which I believe will help to make our Nation energy independent. While there has not been focused attention on LNG, it remains a viable energy alternative. Therefore, I'm concerned by provisions that would designate the Coast Guard as the sole agency responsible for LNG security.

Mr. Speaker, I reluctantly rise in opposition to H.R. 2830, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007.

I'd like to first comment on provisions in the underlying bill which affect the Deepwater program. We in Congress cannot lose sight of the purpose of Deepwater, which is to provide the men and women of the Coast Guard with the necessary tools to protect our homeland. I applaud actions undertaken to move this program in the right direction and support this